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Seventeen primary schools across Norfolk embark on programme which helps pupils manage their emotions

Staff from seventeen primary schools from across Norfolk attended training on the 5th and 6th September in order to prepare them for delivering PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) with their pupils aged five to eleven. PATHS is an evidence based programme and helps support young children's emotional development, communication and understanding.

PATHS has been successfully piloted with 1,400 children from eight primary schools in the west of Norfolk and teachers have been impressed with the results, celebrating improved concentration, social skills and understanding. In addition, there has been a reduction in conflict and disruptive behaviour. The pilot has shown that PATHS, if implemented as a whole schools approach, is hugely successful in supporting children's emotional well-being and making schools a more harmonious place for both teaching and learning.

The programme gives children the ability to recognise and understand what they are feeling and provides them with problem solving techniques to support them in managing their reactions. It encourages children (and adults) to talk about their feelings, compliment one another, share and understand how their actions affects others. By developing the language they have to describe their feelings and giving them new ways to express frustration and anger, it can prevent problems from escalating and teach children who are experiencing difficulty how to manage their behaviour. PATHS also encourages and supports regular communication with parents/carers.

Funding from Norfolk County Council through its Early Intervention Grant is being used to support the following schools: Ashleigh Infant, Clover Hill Infant, Cobholm Primary, Drake Infant, Freethorpe Primary, Great Witchingham Primary, Hockering Primary, Old Catton Junior, Ormesby Infant, Queen's Hill Primary, St. Andrew's Primary North Pickenham, St. Michael's VA Junior, St. Peter's CE VC Easton Primary, Toftwood Infant, Toftwood Junior, West Walton Primary and White Woman Lane Junior.

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